

◀ *Medieval illustration of a battle during the Crusades*

Manzikert. Lacking the resources to undertake new campaigns against the Turks, Emperor Alexius I turned to Europe for military aid.

Reading Check Summarizing What threats, both internal and external, did the Byzantine Empire face in the eleventh century?

The Crusades

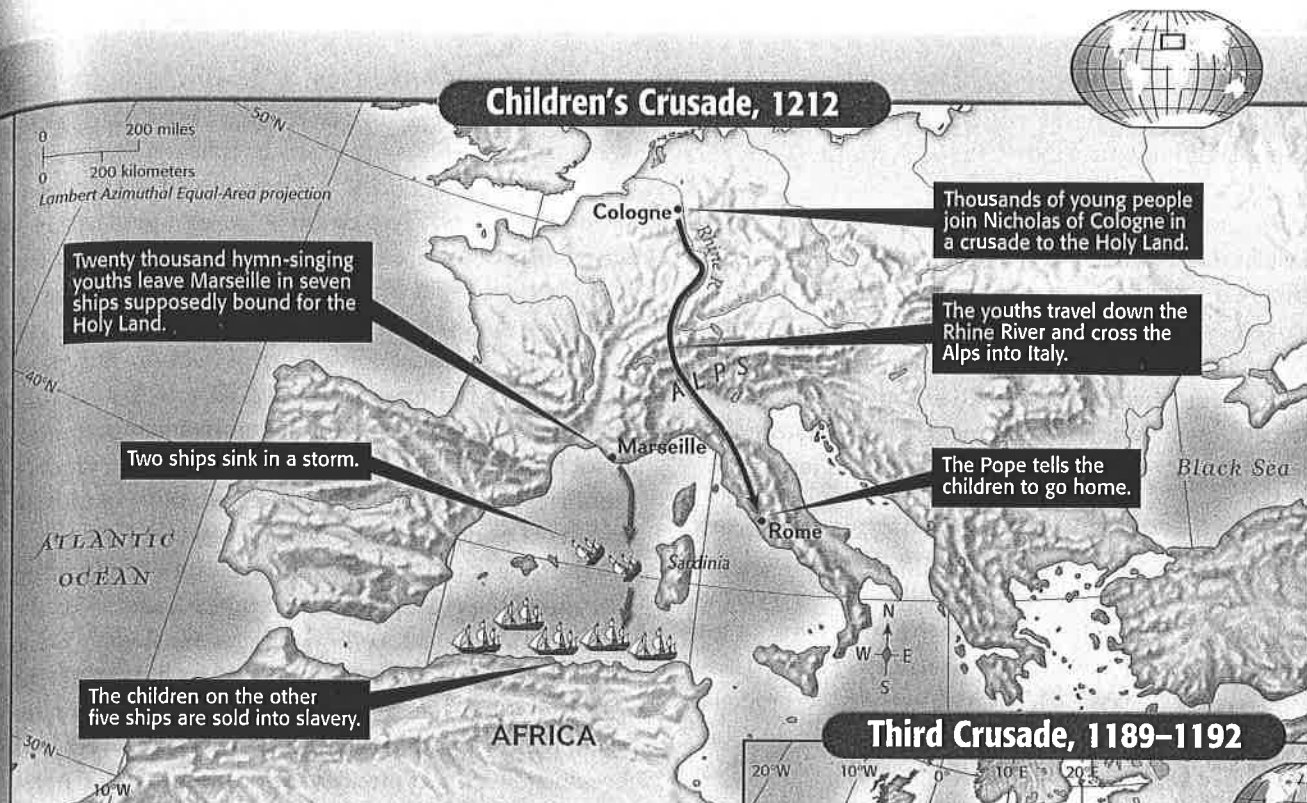
From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, European Christians carried out a series of military expeditions to regain the Holy Land from the Muslims. These expeditions are known as the Crusades.

The push for the Crusades came when the Byzantine emperor Alexius I asked the Europeans for help against the Seljuk Turks, who were Muslims. Pope Urban II, who responded to the request, saw a

golden opportunity to provide papal leadership for a great cause. That cause was rallying the warriors of Europe for the liberation of Jerusalem and the Holy Land (Palestine) from the **infidels** or unbelievers—the Muslims.

At the Council of Clermont in southern France near the end of 1095, Urban II challenged Christians to take up their weapons and join in a holy war. The pope promised: “All who die . . . whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission [forgiveness] of sins.” The enthusiastic crowd cried out: “It is the will of God, it is the will of God.”

Warriors of western Europe, particularly France, formed the first crusading armies. The knights who made up this first crusading army were mostly motivated by religious fervor, but there were other



Geography Skills

From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, many Europeans attempted to free the Holy Land from Muslim occupation.

- 1. Interpreting Maps** Trace the routes of the four crusades shown on the map on page 306. Where did each route begin and end? Did the Children's Crusade (see map above) reach its destination?
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** How did Italian port cities benefit from the Crusades?



attractions as well. Some sought adventure and welcomed the chance to pursue their favorite pastime—fighting. Others saw an opportunity to gain territory, riches, and possibly a title. Merchants in many Italian cities also sought new trading opportunities in Byzantine and Muslim lands.

The Early Crusades The First Crusade began as three organized bands of warriors, most of them French, made their way to the East. The crusading army probably numbered several thousand cavalry and as many as ten thousand infantry. The army captured Antioch in 1098. The crusaders proceeded down the Palestinian coast, avoiding the well-defended coastal cities, and reached Jerusalem in June 1099. The Holy City was taken amid a horrible massacre of the inhabitants.

After further conquests, the crusaders organized four Latin crusader states. Surrounded by Muslims, these crusader kingdoms depended on Italian cities for supplies from Europe. Some Italian port cities, such as Genoa, Pisa, and especially Venice, grew rich and powerful in the process.

It was not easy for the crusader kingdoms to maintain themselves in the East, however. By the 1140s, the Muslims had begun to strike back. The fall of one of the Latin kingdoms led to calls for another crusade, especially from the monastic leader **Saint Bernard of Clairvaux**. Bernard managed to enlist two powerful rulers, King Louis VII of France and Emperor Conrad III of Germany, in a Second Crusade. This campaign, however, was a total failure.

In 1187, the Holy City of Jerusalem fell to Muslim forces under **Saladin**. Three important rulers then

agreed to lead a Third Crusade: Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany; Richard I (Richard the Lionhearted) of England; and Philip II Augustus, King of France.

When members of the Third Crusade arrived in the East in 1189, they encountered problems. Frederick drowned in a local river. The English and French arrived by sea and captured the coastal cities with the aid of their fleets but were unable to move inland against the Muslim forces. After Philip went home, Richard negotiated a settlement with Saladin that permitted Christian pilgrims free access to Jerusalem.

The Later Crusades About six years after the death of Saladin in 1193, **Pope Innocent III** initiated the Fourth Crusade. As it headed east, the crusading army became involved in a fight over the succession to the Byzantine throne. The Venetian leaders of the crusade used the situation to weaken their greatest commercial competitor, the Byzantine Empire. Diverted to Constantinople, the crusaders sacked the city in 1204. Not until 1261 did a Byzantine army recapture the city.

The Byzantine Empire had been reestablished, but it was no longer a great power. The empire now comprised the city of Constantinople and its surrounding lands, as well as some lands in Asia Minor. In this reduced size, the empire limped along for another 190 years, until the Ottoman Turks conquered it in 1453.

Despite failures, the crusading ideal continued. In Germany in 1212, a youth known as Nicholas of Cologne announced that God had inspired him to lead a "children's crusade." Thousands of young people

joined Nicholas and made their way to Italy, where the pope told them to go home. At about the same time, some twenty thousand French children headed to Marseille, where two shipowners agreed to take them to the Holy Land. Two of the ships sent perished in a storm. The other five sailed to North Africa, where the children were sold into slavery. The next crusades of adult warriors were hardly more successful.

Did the Crusades have much effect on European civilization? Historians disagree. There is no doubt that the Crusades benefited the Italian port cities, especially Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Even without the Crusades, however, Italian merchants would have increased trade with the Eastern world.

The Crusades had some unfortunate side effects on European society. The first widespread attacks on the Jews began in the context of the Crusades. Some Christians argued that to fight the Muslims while the "murderers of Christ," as they called the Jews, ran free at home was unthinkable. The massacre of Jews became a feature of medieval European life.

Perhaps the greatest impact of the Crusades was political. They eventually helped to break down feudalism. As kings levied taxes and raised armies, nobles joining the Crusades sold their lands and freed their serfs. As the nobles lost power, the kings were able to create stronger central governments. Taxing trade with the East also provided kings with new wealth. This paved the way for the development of true nation-states. By the mid-1400s, four strong states—Portugal, Spain, England, and France—would emerge in Europe.

Reading Check Summarizing What factors motivated Europeans to participate in a Crusade?

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** patriarch, schism, Crusades, infidel.
- 2. Identify** Justinian, *The Body of Civil Law*, Byzantine Empire, Macedonians, Seljuk Turks, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, Saladin, Pope Innocent III.
- 3. Locate** Constantinople, Syria, Palestine, Balkans.
- 4. Explain** how church and state were linked in the Byzantine Empire.
- 5. List** Justinian's accomplishments.

Critical Thinking

- 6. Explain** Why did cities such as Venice flourish as a result of the Crusades?
- 7. Organizing Information** Use a table like the one below to summarize the results of the First, Second, and Third Crusades.

	1st Crusade	2nd Crusade	3rd Crusade
People Involved			
Results			

Analyzing Visuals

- 8. Examine** the medieval illustration of one of the battles of the Crusades shown on page 306. How does this visual portrayal of a battle compare to the idealistic goals of the Crusades themselves?

Writing About History

- 9. Descriptive Writing** Write a travel brochure encouraging people to visit Constantinople. Identify the features of the city in the early Middle Ages. What sites would you use to illustrate your brochure?